

wasteland if we do not address these issues.

So our attempt to put new resources in rural development is to acknowledge the crisis that exists in rural America. So I ask my colleagues as they consider the bill to understand that this resource will also be for farmers, it will be for their families, their neighbors, and their communities.

I would think that most of the farmers that I know, when we explain it to them, they will say, well, we are willing to share for the benefit of all of us who live in rural communities, because we know in the long run, unless these communities are viable and sustainable, that they will not have the resources. Their taxes go up when they have to pay for water resources. They lose their most productive citizens when they have to go somewhere else to work, when we do not have the infrastructure or the digital divide being addressed.

Those kinds of things add to the viability of the rural community, and farming is an essential part of it, but it is not the only part. So we want to make sure that our rural communities and our farmers will have an opportunity for a future. I just stress to my colleagues, they have an opportunity tomorrow, as we consider that amendment, to see the value of using that amendment to share with all.

Finally, there are about 6.6 percent of our citizens who live on farms, and there are more than 94 percent in the rural communities that are non-farm-workers. So this is an opportunity to allow the farm bill, or an opportunity to provide some leadership on this and speak to the larger group of people who can be benefited.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Ms. MCKINNEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. MCKINNEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SMITH of Washington addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. OWENS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

DISPLACED WORKERS RELIEF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, we have all been affected by the tragedies of September 11 in one way or the other. As a Nation, we see things in a new way. We are looking through a veil of shock, of anger, and of grief.

Congress has already moved with breathtaking swiftness to approve \$15 billion for an airline bailout, a bill, by the way, that allows the top executives in the airline industry to keep their current salaries while their companies receive huge Federal payments, and while their workers are losing their jobs.

But so far, when it comes to the airline workers, Congress just cannot seem to find time to help. But one thing has not changed: This Congress is still overlooking the needs of American workers.

Mr. Speaker, more than 100,000 airline employees have already been laid off as a result of the terrorist attacks. It is clear that in the coming weeks, the number of layoffs will increase. Yet, no action has been taken to help workers in the airline industry.

Mr. Speaker, it is disgraceful that we have done nothing to help the pilots, the flight attendants, baggage handlers, and the other employees who have lost their jobs as a result of September 11. It is certain that many of these workers will depend on unemployment benefits for longer than usual. Some will not be able to return to their jobs in the airline industry and will need training to qualify for new jobs. Displaced workers and their families will also need health care coverage while they are getting their lives back to normal.

That is why I am an original cosponsor of H.R. 2955, the Displaced Workers' Assistance Act. This legislation provides meaningful assistance to those workers who have lost their jobs as a result of the terrorist attacks on September 11.

The Displaced Workers Assistance Act makes displaced workers eligible for an additional 52 weeks of unemployment insurance, and displaced workers who normally would not be eligible for unemployment insurance would receive 26 weeks of federally-financed payments. Those workers who cannot reasonably expect to return to their jobs within the airline industry would be eligible for retraining.

Finally, H.R. 2955 would ensure that displaced workers and their families have health insurance by reimbursing the cost of their COBRA payments, or for workers who do not qualify for COBRA, it would cover them under Medicaid.

Just as the airlines need our help because of the tragic events of September 11, so do the airline workers, those who find themselves without jobs, without the skills they need to obtain new jobs, and without health insurance for themselves and their families. These are the very people that made the airline industry successful in the first place.

We have used their skills, we have used their dedication, and now we need

to make sure that they are safe, as well as the airlines. As we help the industry overcome its losses as a result of the September 11 attacks, let us not forget the airline workers.

THE DISPLACED WORKERS ASSISTANCE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. BACA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, last month the House of Representatives voted to help our Nation's airlines keep flying. We also promised relief for American workers. I will state that we promised, we promised help for American workers.

I am here today to remind Members of that promise, and to remind Members that it is not the money that keeps our planes in the air, it is not the money that keeps our economy growing, it is hard-working Americans. We must refocus our efforts. This is not about an industry, this is about hard-working Americans being able to feed their families, being able to feed their families.

Laid-off ground crews and flight attendants deserve a guarantee of health care coverage and an unemployment benefit. Also, it is our duty, I state, it is our duty to provide additional training to those whose duties will forever be changed, and I state, forever be changed.

We all realize that over 100,000 have been laid off. In my immediate area, it is expected that 12,000 will be expected from L.A. International Airport to be laid off.

I am also proud to be a cosponsor of H.R. 2955, this Displaced Workers Assistance Act. That is what the bill is. Mr. Speaker, we must bring this bill, we must bring this bill to the floor. We must stand in solidarity with the airline industry workers and hundreds and thousands of those other hard-working Americans across the Nation impacted by this massive layoff and jobs lost.

Hard work will be our Nation's strength, and I state, will be our Nation's strength. Hard work will fuel our self-reliance.

Mr. Speaker, let us get to work on behalf of the airline employees. Let us get to work on behalf of the working people, on behalf of the working people affected by this tragedy across the Nation.

On September 11, our enemy struck us at the heart. Our enemy struck innocent Americans, and I state, innocent Americans in their workplace, in their workplace, not on the battlefields. Those who died in the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, in the hijacked planes, died at work, died at work. At the top of the tower were restaurant employees preparing for the day, financial analysts devoted to keeping our economy strong, government employees securing our Nation